

## SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR SWITCHING VARIABLELY SIZED INFORMATION GROUPS

### ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

5           A system and method are provided for locking a link to  
transfer variable length information packets across a packet/cell switch.  
The invention uses a least recently used arbitration process to select a  
switch input for each switch output. In the event that multiple switch  
outputs nominate a common switch input, a least recently used  
10 arbitration process selects between nominating switch outputs. Then, the  
arbitration process is repeated for switch outputs that remain unlinked.  
Once a switch output and switch input have been linked, the information  
packet is completely transferred across the switch before those outputs  
and inputs again become eligible for arbitration.